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National
News Council

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CIAI-01 Bush, George

Salant of CBS joins National News Council

By Jane Levere

The National News Council, media watchdog organization, expanded its membership by electing Richard S. Salant, president of CBS News, at its meeting in New York last week.

Salant's election followed a recommendation made in February by an independent evaluation committee suggesting that the NNC expand its membership from 15 to 18. The committee also recommended then that the council elect "active employees of national media" who would abstain from voting in cases involving their own organizations.

In other action at the meeting, the council found four complaints lodged against newspapers unwarranted.

The first complaint, filed against the *Chicago Tribune* and WGN-TV, Chicago, charged the two media with attempting to "black-out" a televised address by Republican Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan by not giving it any advance notice and by only mentioning it on the television page.

The council ruled that since Reagan's speech was a paid announcement, neither the *Tribune* nor the television station had any obligation to publicize the TV speech.

The second complaint, lodged against the *New York Times*, was an objection to the *Times*' policy of selling space for public issue advertising on its op-ed page.

The council here concluded that a newspaper has a right to decide where to place such ads in its columns.

The third complaint, filed on behalf of the National Council of Irish Americans, also concerned the *Times*. These charges were dismissed.

The council also dismissed a complaint filed by Dr. Stephen Barrett, chairman of the Lehigh (Pa.) Committee Against Health Fraud, Inc., against James J. Kilpatrick of the *Washington Star* Syndicate. Barrett complained that Kilpatrick had referred to Laetrile, an alleged cancer cure, as a harmless nutrient in one of his columns.

The council ruled that Kilpatrick, as an editorial columnist, was clearly free to imply that Laetrile was harmless because he was expressing his personal opinion of a controversial public issue.

Finally, the council announced that two of its members, William A. Rusher and R. Peter Strass, and associate director Ned Schnurman, would meet with CIA director George Bush's top assistants June 17 to discuss the agency's position on the employment of journalists by the intelligence community.